

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMDISSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB

SUBJECT: GHE ASIAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE ICFTU

SUMMARY: THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE OF THE ICFTU ASIAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION (ARO) ADOPTED A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANIZATION DESIGNED TO INFUSE SOME NEW LIFE INTO IT. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED THAT THE ARO SHOULD EXPAND ITS CONCERNS BEYOND TRADITIONAL TRADE UNION FUNCTIONS AND TO EMPHASIZE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ORGANIZATION OF THE RURAL POOR. THE COMMITTEE, WHOSE

RECOMMENDATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO BE APPROVED BY THE ARO AND THE ICFTU, CONCLUDED THAT ALL ICFTU FUNCTIONS IN ASIA SHOULD BE CONTROLLED BY THE ARO. THIS IS TO INCLUDE THE ASIAN TRADE UNION COLLEGE WHICH UP TO NOW HAS FUNCTIONED INDEPENDENTLY. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUB-REGIONAL OFFICES IN TOKYO AND SINGAPORE IN ADDITION TO THE NEW DELHI OFFICE. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES ARE TO BE BEEFED UP. THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE'S

RECOMMENDATION ON FUNDING CONTEMPLATES THAT "FRIENDLY FOUNDATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES" WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE ARO. THEIR ASSISTANCE, HOWEVER, IS SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE CONCERNED NATIONAL CENTER AND ASSURANCES THAT THE CONTRIBUTOR RESPECTS ICFTU-ARO POLICIES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE RECOMMENDATION ON FUNDING WAS DRAWN UP WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF THE ARO'S RECEIVING ASSISTANCE FROM AAFLI. END SUMMARY.

1. THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE OF THE ASIAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION (ARO) OF THE ICFTU MET IN NEW DELHI THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH TO REVIEW THE OBJECTIVES AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE ARO. THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE ARO'S EXECUTIVE BOARD, THE ARO CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR MAY IN MANILA, AND BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE IPFTU. SOURCES HERE EXPECT THAT SUCH APPROVAL WILL BE READILY FORTHCOMING.

2. OBJECTIVES: THE COMMITTEE CONCLUDED THAT THE ARO SHOULD WIDEN THE SCOPE OF ITS CONCERNS BEYOND TRADITIONAL TRADE UNION FUNCTIONS SUCH AS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND PROMOTE THEIR "SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE." AFFILIATED NATIONAL CENTERS SHOULD ENGAGE IN A VARIETY OF "ECONOMIC UNDERTAKINGS" (E.G., COOPERATIVES). EMPHASIS SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE RURAL POOR.

3. ORGANIZATION: THE COMMITTEE CONCLUDED THAT ALL ACTIVITIES OF THE ICFTU IN THE ASIAN REGION SHOULD BE PLACED UNDER THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL OF THE ARO. SPECIFICALLY, THE ICFTU'S ASIAN TRADE UNION COLLEGE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SHOULD BE PLACED UNDER THE ARO'S EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. (COMMENT: UP TO NOW THE COLLEGE HAS BEEN FUNDED DIRECTLY BY THE ICFTU HEADQUARTERS AND NOT SUBJECT TO ARO CONTROL.) AN EDUCATION COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE ARO EXECUTIVE BOARD SHOULD BE MADE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLICIES AND PROJECTS OF THE ARO'S EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WHICH WILL SUPERVISE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COLLEGE. REPRESENTATIVES OF "FRATERNAL" INTERNATIONAL TRADE

SECRETARIATS OPERATING IN THE ASIAN REGION ARE TO BE INVITED TO SIT ON THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

4. THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE ALSO RECOMMENDED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUB-REGIONAL OFFICES: ONE IN TOKYO TO COVER JAPAN, KOREA, THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND HONG KONG AND ANOTHER IN SINGAPORE TO COVER SINGAPORE, THE PHILIPPINES, MALAYSIA, INDONESIA, THAILAND, FIJI, AND PAPUA GUINEA. THE NEW DELHI HEADQUARTERS OFFICE WILL CONTINUE WITH PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES FOR INDIA, PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH, SRI LANKA, NEPAL, AND BURMA.

5. RESEARCH: THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF THE ARO WAS REDEFINED BY THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE. IT IS TO ASSIST IN THE IDENTIFICATION OF "ECONOMIC AND COOPERATIVE VENTURES COMING FROM EACH MEMBER COUNTRY AND IN THEIR IMPLEMENTATION. THE DEPARTMENT IS TO COLLECT DATA ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION AND TO PREPARE BRIEFS TO BE USED BY ARO REPRESENTATIVES IN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS.

6. FUNDING: IN ITS REPORT THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE STATED: "IT IS EXPECTED THAT FUNDING... WILL COME FROM FRIENDLY FOUNDATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES WHICH ARE ALREADY OPERATING IN THE REGION THROUGH BILATERAL PROGRAMMES IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, WITH WHOM THE ARO HAS THUS FAR NOT HAD ANY PROGRAMME." BEFORE ACCEPTING FUNDING FROM ANY FOUNDATION OR INTERNATIONAL AGENCY, THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED THAT THE NATIONAL CENTER IN THE

COUNTRY CONCERNED WOULD HAVE TO AGREE TO SUCH FUNDING AND THE CONTRIBUTING AGENCY WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE ASSURANCES THAT IT RESPECTS THE "BASIC POSITIONS OF THE ICFTU AND THE ICFTU-ARO IN RESPECT OF VITAL AREAS OF POLICY." LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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7. COMMENT: THE REQUIREMENT OF NATIONAL CENTER APPROVAL OF THE SOURCE OF FUNDING WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN DRAWN UP WITH AAFI IN MIND. THIS WOULD GIVE THE INDIAN AFFILIATES, FOR EXAMPLE, WHICH DO NOT HAVE "RELATIONS" WITH AAFI THE RIGHT TO REJECT THE USE OF AAFI FUNDS IN INDIA.

8. ACCORDING TO A KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCE, THE OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE WAS TO ATTEMPT TO INFUSE SOME LIFE INTO THE ARO. PLACING THE COLLEGE UNDER ITS CONTROL WILL GIVE IT AT LEAST ONE IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITY. ADDITIONALLY, THE DECISION TO MAKE THE COLLEGE SUBORDINATE TO THE ARO IS UNDERSTOOD AS THE CULMINATION OF A LONG STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE ARO REGIONAL SECRETARY, V.S. MATHUR, AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE COLLEGE, VIJENDRA KABRA.

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